

Wedding Policy



Terminology

Couple – The Bride & Groom seeking to be married
Pastor – The Pastor of First United Methodist Church

Expectation of the Couple

Scheduling the Wedding - In order to schedule a wedding at First Church, the Couple must meet with the Pastor to clear the date and time. No wedding is officially on the church calendar until that meeting takes place.

Counseling Sessions - Any Couple scheduling a wedding at First Church will attend at least four premarital sessions with the Pastor. The sessions deal with communications, finances, faith and more.

Conduct at the Wedding - The Couple is responsible for the conduct of the wedding party at the rehearsal and wedding. We ask that these church rules be followed:

- **The conduct of the wedding party should show respect for God and the facility.**
- **No smoking in the building.**
- **No alcoholic beverages on church grounds.**
- **For weddings taking place in the church, regular church attendance is expected from the time the wedding is booked until the ceremony takes place.**

Weddings off-site – Pastor will conduct weddings at another location. However, if the venue is an outdoor location, a back-up plan in case of inclement weather is required.

Expectations of the First Church Pastor

Conducting the Wedding - The Pastor will officiate at all weddings held in our facility. The decision to allow outside clergy to participate is at the discretion of the Pastor.

Counseling - The Pastor is responsible for adequately preparing the Couple for the wedding service and married life. The Pastor will have as many sessions as is necessary in order to acquaint the Couple with the Christian wedding ceremony and with what it means to be "married."

Rehearsal and Wedding - The Pastor will conduct both the rehearsal and the wedding service. At the rehearsal, all members of the wedding party will be informed of their responsibilities and should be confident that they know their roles in the wedding service. Making sure that everything goes smoothly is one of the Pastor's duties.

Follow-up - The Pastor invites the Couple to set a follow-up session with him for six months following the wedding service. The purpose is to deal with questions and situations arising in marriage which were not anticipated prior to the wedding.

Expectations of First United Methodist Church

Clean Facility - In accepting the wedding service of a Couple, First Church is obligated to present a clean and pleasing facility for the wedding. This includes a place for the bride and her

attendants to dress and a place for the groom and groomsmen, if they desire to dress at the church.

Reception Option - A couple may also hold their reception at First Church. The rules listed under **Conduct at the Wedding** above also apply to the reception.

Expectations of the Church Organist/Pianist

Church Organist/Pianist - First Church will provide an organist or pianist to perform your wedding if so desired. That person will maintain the proper reverence in the wedding through the selection of music. Couples are encouraged to consult with the organist/pianist and Pastor to choose music they would like played. The organist/pianist will attend rehearsal, accompany soloists and play with other musicians, such as trumpets, violinists, etc. The Couple is responsible for sharing contact information so the musicians can set times for practice.

Outside Organist/Pianist - Couples also have the option of choosing organist/pianist or other musicians that are not from First Church. All music must be approved by the Pastor.

Expectations of the Church Custodian

The Custodian will make sure that the facility is clean and neat prior to the wedding ceremony. The Custodian will also clean and straighten up the facility after all weddings. **Note: this does not lessen the responsibility of the wedding party to be respectful of the property.** An extra custodial fee may be deducted from the Security Deposit to clean up bird seed, bubbles, etc. used after the ceremony.

Steps in Getting Married

1. Contact the church to see if both the church and pastor are available for the desired date.
2. Meet with the Pastor to set up the specifics of the wedding.
3. Contact the Clerk's Office to learn the requirements for a marriage license.
4. Apply for the license approximately one month prior to the wedding.
5. Take the Marriage License and the complimentary copy to the Pastor once they have been received from the Clerk's Office.

General Information

Same Gender Marriages – Per paragraph 341.6 of the United Methodist Book of Discipline, ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers/staff and shall not be conducted in our churches. First Church also does not rent space in our building for use for same gender wedding receptions.

Size of the Sanctuary - The main floor of the sanctuary contains 26 pews arranged in two sections. The center aisle requires a 100-foot cloth to reach from the altar area to the back of the pews. The sanctuary will seat approximately 200 people comfortably. The balcony will accommodate another 50 guests comfortably.

Photography - Photographers should check with the Pastor prior to the wedding service for directions. They are welcome to take any pictures during the service which can be taken without drawing attention away from the service.

Video of the wedding is permitted. You may use our Media Coordinator to film the wedding from the balcony or use your own videographer. The Pastor will help locate a good vantage point for the video.

We understand and agree to treat the facilities at First United Methodist Church with respect and agree to abide with the regulations and policies set forth in the Wedding Policy.

Bride

Groom

Date